



THE  
STATE  
OF THE  
CASE.



S there cannot happen a greater Distress, than a Necessity of appealing to Mankind against Hardships impos'd by those with whom a Man has liv'd in Friendship ; the Injury which I have receiv'd, great as it is, has nothing in it so painful, as that it comes from whence it does. When I complain'd of it in a private

Letter to the Chamberlain, he was pleased to send his Secretary to me, with a Message to forbid me writing, speaking, corresponding, or applying to him in any manner whatever. Since he has been pleased to send an *English* Gentleman a Banishment from his Person and Councils, in a Stile thus Royal, I doubt not but the Reader will justify me in the Method I take to explain this Matter to the Town. I am sure there is no Man living more obsequious to his Friends than I am ; and I hope to show my Enemies, all my Life, that I certainly have Courage enough to defend my self against Wrongs, as well as to forgive them, according as the Circumstances require one or the other, in the respective Characters of a Christian, and an honest Man.

My Lord Chamberlain has, contrary to Law and Justice, dispossessed me of my Freehold in a manner as injurious to the King his Master, as to me his Fellow-Subject. But though I had a Right to dispute even a legal Disturbance of me in my Partners, Tenants, and Servants, as the whole Company of Actors (in their different Qualities) are to me in the Eye of the Law.

Law. I say, though I might very justly have insisted upon Privilege of Parliament in the Case, I told my Lord, in my Letter to him, that I had not Confidence to urge, even against Oppression from him, a Right which my Electors gave me, upon no other Motive but their Knowledge of the kind Opinion he had of me at the time when they chose me. No: I could not plead what I owed to his Favour against his Change of Mind, but have waited, as I promised, till he had cancelled his good Offices by Injuries, which I am to show he has already done. In order to this, I must recite my Patent, as follows.

‘ **G** EORGE, by the Grace of God,  
 ‘ of Great Britain, France and Ire-  
 ‘ land, King, Defender of the Faith, &c.  
 ‘ To all to whom these Presents shall  
 ‘ come, Greeting. We having inform’d  
 ‘ Ourselves, since Our Accession to Our  
 ‘ Crown, of the State of Our Theatre;  
 ‘ and finding, to our Sorrow, that, thro’  
 ‘ the Neglect and ill Management there-  
 ‘ of, the true and only End of its Insti-  
 ‘ tution is greatly perverted; and, in-  
 ‘ stead

'stead of exhibiting such Representa-  
 tions of Humane Life as may tend  
 to the Encouragement and Honour  
 of Religion and Virtue, and Discoun-  
 tenancing Vice, The *English* Stage  
 hath been the Complaint of the So-  
 ber, Intelligent and Religious Part of  
 Our People ; and, by indecent and im-  
 modest Expressions, by prophane Al-  
 lusion to Holy Scripture, by abusive  
 and scurrilous Representations of the  
 Clergy, and by the Success and Ap-  
 plause bestowed on Libertine Cha-  
 racters, it hath given great and insuf-  
 ferable Scandal to Religion and good  
 Manners. And, in the Representations  
 of Civil Government, Care has not  
 been taken to create, in the Minds  
 of Our good Subjects, just and dutiful  
 Idea's of the Power and Authority of  
 Magistrates, as well as to preserve a  
 due Sense of the Rights of our Peo-  
 ple ; and through many other Abuses,  
 that, which under a wise Direction,  
 and due Regulation, would be useful  
 and honourable, has proved, and, if  
 not reformed, will continue a Re-  
 proach to Government, and Disho-  
 nour to Religion. And it being Our  
 pious Resolution, which, with the  
 Blessing



‘ Blessing of Almighty God, We will  
 ‘ steadily pursue, through the whole  
 ‘ Course of Our Reign, not only by Our  
 ‘ own Example, but by all other Means  
 ‘ possible, to promote the Honour of  
 ‘ Religion and Virtue; and, on every  
 ‘ Occasion, to encourage good Litera-  
 ‘ ture, and to endeavour the Establish-  
 ‘ ment of good Manners and Discipline  
 ‘ among all Our Loving Subjects, in all  
 ‘ Stations and Ranks of Men whatso-  
 ‘ ever; these being, in Our Opinion,  
 ‘ the proper Means to render Our King-  
 ‘ doms happy and flourishing. We  
 ‘ having seriously revolved on the Pre-  
 ‘ mises, and being well satisfied of the  
 ‘ Ability, and good Disposition of Our  
 ‘ Trusty and Well-beloved *Richard*  
 ‘ *Steele* Esq; for the promoting these  
 ‘ Our Royal Purposes, not only from  
 ‘ his publick Services to Religion and  
 ‘ Virtue, but his steady Adherence to  
 ‘ the true Interest of his Country. Know  
 ‘ ye, That We, out of Our especial  
 ‘ Grace, certain Knowledge, and meer  
 ‘ Motion, and in Consideration of the  
 ‘ good and faithful Services, which the  
 ‘ said *Richard Steele* hath done Us, and  
 ‘ doth intend to do, for the future,  
 ‘ have Given and Granted, and by  
 ‘ these

\* these Presents, for Us and Our Heirs,  
 \* and Successors, do Give and Grant  
 \* unto him the said *Richard Steele*, his  
 \* Executors, Administrators, and As-  
 \* signs, for and during the Term of his  
 \* Natural Life, and for and during the  
 \* full End and Term of Three Years,  
 \* to be computed next and immediately  
 \* after the Decease of him the said  
 \* *Richard Steele*, full Power, Licence,  
 \* and Authority, to Gather together,  
 \* Form, Entertain, Govern, Privilege,  
 \* and Keep a Company of Comedians  
 \* for Our Service, to Exercise and Act  
 \* Tragedies, Plays, Opera's, and other  
 \* Performances of the Stage, within the  
 \* House in *Drury-lane*, wherein the same  
 \* are now exercised, by Vertue of a  
 \* Licence Granted by Us to him the  
 \* said *Richard Steele*, *Robert Wilks*, *Colley*  
 \* *Cibber*, *Thomas Dogget*, and *Barton*  
 \* *Booth*, or within any other House  
 \* built, or to be built, where he or  
 \* they can best be fitted for that Pur-  
 \* pose, within Our Cities of *London*  
 \* and *Westminster*, or the Suburbs there-  
 \* of; such House or Houses so to be  
 \* built (if Occasion shall require) to  
 \* be Assigned, Allotted out by the  
 \* Surveyor of Our Works for a Theatre  
 \* or

' or Playhouse, with necessary Tiring  
 ' and Retiring Rooms, and other Places  
 ' convenient, of such Extent and Di-  
 ' mension, as the said *Richard Steele*, his  
 ' Executors, Administrators or Assigns,  
 ' shall think fitting; wherein Trage-  
 ' dies, Comedies, Plays, Opera's, Mu-  
 ' sical-Scenes, and all other Entertain-  
 ' ments of the Stage whatsoever, may  
 ' be shewed and presented. Which  
 ' said Company shall be Our Servants,  
 ' and be stiled *The Royal Company of*  
 ' *Comedians*, and shall consist of such  
 ' Numbers as the said *Richard Steele*,  
 ' his Executors, Administrators, or As-  
 ' signs, shall from Time to Time think  
 ' meet. And we do hereby, for Us,  
 ' Our Heirs and Successors, Grant unto  
 ' the said *Richard Steele*, his Executors,  
 ' Administrators or Assigns, full Power,  
 ' Licence, and Authority to Permit  
 ' such Persons, at and during the Plea-  
 ' sure of the said *Richard Steele*, his  
 ' Executors, Administrators or Assigns,  
 ' from Time to Time, to act Plays and  
 ' Entertainments of the Stage of all  
 ' sorts, peaceably and quietly, *without*  
 ' *the Impeachment or Impediment of*  
 ' *any Person or Persons whatsoever*, for  
 ' the honest Recreation of such as shall

' desire to see the same ; nevertheless  
 ' under the Regulations herein after-  
 ' mention'd, and such other as the said  
 ' *Richard Steele*, from Time to Time,  
 ' in his Direction, shall find reasonable  
 ' and necessary for Our Service. And  
 ' We do for Ourselves, Our Heirs and  
 ' Successors, further Grant to him the  
 ' said *Richard Steele*, his Executors, Ad-  
 ' ministrators and Assigns, as aforesaid,  
 ' That it shall and may be lawful, to  
 ' and for the said *Richard Steele*, his  
 ' Executors, Administrators and As-  
 ' signs, to Take and Receive of such Our  
 ' Subjects as shall resort to see or hear  
 ' any such Plays, Scenes and Entertain-  
 ' ments whatsoever, such Sum or Sums  
 ' of Money, as either have accus-  
 ' tomedly been given and taken in the  
 ' like kind, or as shall be thought rea-  
 ' sonable by him or them, in regard of  
 ' the great Expences of Scenes, Musick,  
 ' and such new Decorations as have not  
 ' been formerly used. And further,  
 ' for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors,  
 ' We do hereby Give and Grant unto  
 ' the said *Richard Steele*, his Executors,  
 ' Administrators and Assigns, full Power  
 ' to make such Allowances out of that  
 ' which he shall so receive by the Act-  
 ' ing



( II )

ing of Plays and Entertainments of  
the Stage, as aforesaid, to the Actors,  
and other Persons employed in Acting,  
Representing, or in any Quality whatsoever,  
about the said Theatre, as he  
or they shall think fit. And, that  
the said Company shall be under the  
sole Government and Authority of  
the said *Richard Steele*, his Executors,  
Administrators, or Assigns: And all  
scandalous and mutinous Persons shall,  
from time to time, by him and them be  
Ejected and Disabled from Playing in  
the said Theatre. And for the better  
attaining Our Royal Purposes in this  
Behalf, We have thought fit hereby to  
declare, that henceforth no Representations  
be admitted on the Stage  
by Vertue, or under Colour, of these  
Our Letters Patents, whereby the  
Christian Religion in general, or the  
Church of *England* may, in any manner,  
suffer Reproach, strictly inhibiting  
every Degree of Abuse, or Misrepresentation  
of sacred Characters,  
tending to expose Religion itself, and  
to bring it into Contempt; and that  
no such Character be otherwise introduced,  
or placed in other Light, than  
such as may enhance the just Esteem

' of those who truly answer the End of  
 ' their sacred Function. We further  
 ' enjoin the strictest Regard to such  
 ' Representations, as any way concern  
 ' Civil Policy, or the Constitution of  
 ' Our Government, that these may  
 ' contribute to the Support of Our  
 ' sacred Authority, and the Preserva-  
 ' tion of Order and good Government.  
 ' And it being Our Royal Desire, that,  
 ' for the future, Our Theatre may be  
 ' Instrumental to the Promotion of Vir-  
 ' tue, and instructive to humane Life,  
 ' We do hereby Command and Enjoin,  
 ' That no New Play, or any Old or  
 ' Revived Play be Acted under the Au-  
 ' thority hereby Granted, containing  
 ' any Passages or Expressions offensive  
 ' to Piety and good Manners, until the  
 ' same be Corrected and Purged by the  
 ' said Governor from all such offensive  
 ' and scandalous Passages and Expres-  
 ' sions. And these Our Letters Patents,  
 ' or the Inrollment thereof, shall be,  
 ' in all Things, good and effectual  
 ' in the *Law*, according to the true In-  
 ' tent and Meaning of the same, any  
 ' Thing in these Presents contained,  
 ' or any Law, Statute, Act, Ordinance,  
 ' Proclamation, Provision, or Restric-  
 ' tion,

‘ tion, or any other Matter, Cause, or  
 ‘ Thing whatsoever to the contrary, in  
 ‘ any wise notwithstanding. In Wit-  
 ‘ nels whereof, We have caused These  
 ‘ Our Letters to be made Patents.

*Witness Our Self at Westminster, the  
 Nineteenth Day of January in the  
 First Year of Our Reign.*

By Writ of Privy Seal.

C o c k s.

When Mr. *Steele* was dispatch'd by the then Solicitor-General Mr. *Lechmere*, the Learned Gentleman used this Expression : *Sir, the King has here given you a Free-Hold ; and if from it you can prove you receive Six Hundred Pounds a Year, you are qualified to be Knight of any Shire in England.* When this Patent was passing, the Patentee was inform'd, that this Grant would be an Infringement upon those under which Mr. *Rich* claimed. Upon which, in Justice to His Majesty, and Abhorrence of encroaching upon other Men; the Patentee went to the Secretary's Office, and obtain'd the Reference, before address'd

dress'd to the Attorney, or Solicitor-  
 General, should be directed to the Attor-  
 ney and Solicitor-General. In this he  
 acted with his known Zeal for His  
 Majesty's Honour and Service, which  
 would not admit him to desire any  
 Favour to the Injury of any other of  
 His Subjects. The Terms of this Pa-  
 tent were settled by the joint Consent  
 of Sir *Edward Northey* and Mr. *Lech-*  
*mere*, Names illustrious in the Law,  
 and no way inclin'd, or capable of be-  
 ing awed into a Concurrence from De-  
 ference to each others Opinion. They  
 agreed the King could grant this, and  
 I shall take care to assert my Right to  
 what he has granted. The Patentee  
 carried his Self-denial still further; and  
 though he could have had this Patent,  
 as well as Sir *William Davenant* and  
 Mr. *Killigrew* had before him, to him-  
 self and his Heirs for ever, he asked it  
 but for his Life, and three Years after  
 his Death; which three Years he thought  
 necessary to be in his Executors, to make  
 an End of any Account between his Fa-  
 mily and the Theatre upon his Death.  
 The Patent itself, as to the Powers in  
 it, is exactly the same with those others  
 formerly granted, and no way opposes  
 or



or impairs any Authority of a Chamberlain, any more than those did : Neither is there any the least Pretension, or Colour of Pretension, for disputing this Authority, without those who dispute it will assert, that King *George* is not, to all Intents and Purposes, as much King of *England* as King *Charles* the Second. But however other Men, for their own Humour, or Vanity, attempt to diminish, frustrate, or invade this Act of their Master, I will, to their Teeth, defend it ; and make them understand, that there are Men who are not to be teiz'd, vex'd, worried, calumniated, or Brow-beaten out of the Laws of *England*.

But some have been pleas'd to say, in common Conversation, that Actors, as such, are not within the Rules of the rest of the World ; as if they were among Men, like the *Fera Natura* among Animals ; and that it is against our Laws to tolerate the Profession in itself. If this were so, they would (except within the Verge of the Court) be no more under a legal Dispensation or Constitution, when directed by the Lord-Chamberlain, than they would when governed by any other Man ; and,  
by

by the way, he has not taken this Power to destroy it as unwarrantable, but to exercise it, be it what it will, himself. This Matter will appear as it ought to do, by the Opinions of *Pemberton*, *Northey*, and *Parker*, who have been consulted by the Successors of *Davenant* and *Killigrew*. I shall give them in the Order I have named them, and as the Questions were stated to those great Men.

*Quere* 1. ' Whether the Grant of a  
' Power to *A. B.* his Heirs and Assigns,  
' by the Letters Patents, to erect a Thea-  
' tre, and to act Plays, &c. be a good  
' Grant in Fee, and Assignable, or shall  
' determine with King *Charles* the Se-  
' cond's Death ?

*Quere*. ' About the Words, To be  
' Servants to the King and Queen, and  
' to be Servants to the Duke of York ?

1. I do not see, that to act Plays, or Interludes, or Opera's, is unlawful in it self, either by the Common Law, or by any Statute. It's true, to wand'r about from Country to Country, as Stage-Players, is forbid by 39 El. c. 4. But not the act-ing of Plays, &c. which may be used (for ought I see) as an innocent Recreation.

2. I

2. I think the King's Patent may be available, to give the better Countenance to the Entertainments, and so may be Transfer'd from Ancestor to Heir, or Assign'd for that Purpose.

3. For that Purpose, to give a Countenance or Reputation to these Play-houses, I think it may be effectual, after the Death of King Charles II. and that Operation I think did not dye.

Quere 2. ' Whether the King's Agreement, that no Company shall be permitted in London, Westminster, or the Suburbs, shall hinder all others from acting within that Circuit, unless authorized under the Letters Patents ?

Taking this to be an Imployment permitted, or not prohibited by Law, (as I take this to be ) I do not think the King's Concession in his Letters Patents, that no one shall be permitted to act Stage Plays, or Interludes, &c. in London, or Westminster, will be effectual to hinder others from acting there. However, I think, such a Prohibition will last no longer than the King who grants it lives.

C

Quere 3.

*Quere* 3. ' Whether the Lord Cham-  
 ' berlain, as such, or any other except the  
 ' King, can Grant a Licence to Actors,  
 ' in regard it is not (as suppos'd) a Lawful  
 ' Calling, but only for the King's Plea-  
 ' sure? The Lord-Chamberlain hath  
 ' lately sworn several Actors to be the  
 ' King's Servants, to save them from be-  
 ' ing molested?

*If the acting of Plays were unlawful  
 in its Nature, and Malum in se, (which  
 I do not take it to be) I do not see  
 how the Lord-Chamberlain, or any other  
 Officer, or the King himself, could give a  
 Licence to any to act Plays, &c. But ta-  
 king the Imployment not to be unlawful  
 in itself, I conceive the Lord-Chamberlain,  
 or Master of the Revels (with the King's  
 Allowance) may authorize any Persons to  
 act, or forbid and hinder them from acting  
 in any of the King's Houses or Palaces.  
 And their Grants to any to act in other  
 Places may be us'd to countenance or give  
 a Popular Reputation to the Comedies or  
 Plays that they act. But I know of no  
 other Effect that they can have. And I  
 conceive they cannot prohibit any to act in  
 any Place out of the King's Palaces, so  
 long*



*long as they behave themselves modestly and decently.*

F. PEMBERTON.

*Sir Edward Northey is consulted, and delivers his Opinion as follows:*

‘ Whether the Grants by Letters  
 ‘ Patents from King *Charles* the 2<sup>d</sup> to  
 ‘ Sir *William Davenant*, his Heirs and  
 ‘ Assigns, to purchase Lands, and to  
 ‘ build a Theatre thereon to act Plays,  
 ‘ be not a good Grant in Fee, and  
 ‘ assignable? Or whether the same be  
 ‘ determinable upon the Death of  
 ‘ King *Charles* II. they having laid out  
 ‘ to the Value of 8000 *l.* in purchasing  
 ‘ Land, and building Theatres, and o-  
 ‘ ther necessary Buildings and Decora-  
 ‘ tions, for the more commodious Re-  
 ‘ presentation of Opera’s and other  
 ‘ Plays by Virtue of the Letters Pa-  
 ‘ tents?’

*I am of Opinion, the Letters Pa-  
 tents were a good Licence to Sir Wil-  
 liam Davenant, his Heirs and Assigns, to  
 build a Theatre, and therein to cause Plays  
 to be acted; and if he, his Heirs or As-  
 signs,*

*signs, do not abuse such Licence, they may continue the Plays, notwithstanding the Death of King Charles II.*

24th Feb. EDWARD NORTHEY.  
1702-3.

I shall conclude my Authorities by the Opinion of Sir *Thomas Parker*, now Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain.

*Quere*, ' Whether the Grant by Letters Patents from King *Charles II.* to Sir *William Davenant*, his Heirs and Assigns, to Purchase Lands, and to build a Theatre thereon to act Plays, &c. and a like Grant to *Tho. Killigrew*, Esq; to build another Theatre, &c. be not good Grants in Fee, and Assignable? Or whether the same be not determinable upon the Death of King *Charles II.* They having laid out to the Value of 8000 *l.* in Purchasing Lands, and Building two Theatres, and other necessary Buildings, Scenes and Decorations for the more commodious Representation of Opera's, Plays, and Entertainments of the Stage,

‘ Stage, under the Authority of the  
 ‘ said Patents ?

*Answ. The Letters Patents are both  
 express, That the King Grants for him,  
 his Heirs and Successors; and I think  
 the Assigns of Sir William Davenant  
 and Mr. Killigrew, and their Heirs, may  
 still continue their Plays, and Theatrical  
 Entertainments in the House built under  
 the Authority of those Letters Patents,  
 as well as Sir William Davenant and  
 Mr. Killigrew themselves could have done  
 if they were now alive, or as they could  
 do in the Life-time of King Charles II.  
 who made those Grants.*

Nov. 10.

THO. PARKER

1705.

Hence it appears, that the Authority  
 of Licencing Players in this manner, is  
 just, and well supported from the Rea-  
 son of the Thing itself, and this Autho-  
 rity is given to Mr. Steele, in no other  
 manner, than it was before given, and  
 differs only in Circumstances, that plead  
 for Steele. The Grant to Steele for Life,  
 and three Years after, is given upon strong-  
 er Motives, than those alledged for grant-  
 ing to Davenant and Killigrew for ever :  
 K. Charles's

K. *Charles's* Grants were Acts of meer Favour and Motion ; that of King *George*, for worthy Services expressly recited, and has a Merit above them (I mean only as to the Force of the Patents, not the Characters of the Patentees) as much, as voluntary Acts are more valid in Law, than those given for valuable Considerations ; This is the Title by which Sir *Richard Steele* is Governor of the Royal Company of Comedians. We are now to consider the manner of his being deprived of that Right.

The Reader will observe, that my Patent describes very largely the Uses and Purposes of it, as well as the Limitations, and Restrictions under which it ought to be enjoy'd ; and there is no Power which can make it void or ought to frustrate it, except the Patentee, or his Assigns, shall be prov'd to transgress, or go beyond the Limits prescrib'd ; in such Case, there is a plain Method of bringing the Offenders before Courts of Justice, and the Patentee, or those claiming under him, are there to stand upon the Defensive ; But I have been deprived of my Property by Violence, under the Conduct  
of



of Craft, but that Violence has been as open, and that Craft as shallow and as little disguis'd, as follows: Without any Cause assign'd, or Preface declaring by what Authority, a noble Lord sends a Message, directed to Sir *Richard Steele*, Mr. *Wilks*, and Mr. *Booth*, to dismiss Mr. *Cibber*, who for some time submitted to a Disability of appearing on the Stage, during the Pleasure of one that had nothing to do with it. When this lawless Will and Pleasure was chang'd, a very frank Declaration was made, that all the Mortification put upon Mr. *Cibber*, was intended only as a remote beginning of Evils, which were to affect the Patentee, with some broad Intimations, that the Force of the Patent itself should very soon be made ineffectual by a Sign Manual: Under an Amazement at this audacious Proceeding against the Validity of a Patent from the King on the Throne, and taking myself as a Parliamentary Commissioner, to be of Quality to write to Ministers of State, especially when it was only to implore their Assistance and Protection, in order to avert this intended Outrage upon the King's Authority, and the Subjects Property, I writ to two great  
Ministers

Ministers to that Purpose. But so great is the Rage conceiv'd against me, that the Consideration that the Dignity of the King is offended in his Grant, could not protect me, from being ruin'd against his Laws, or procure the least notice of my Remonstrance. However, on *Friday, Jan. 22.* I presented, in the Presence of my Lord-Chamberlain, the following Petition to the King.



TO THE

Most Excellent Majesty.

*The Humble Petition of Sir RICHARD STEELE,*

Sheweth,

THAT Your Petitioner is possessed, by Letters Patents, of the sole Government and Authority of keeping a Company of Comedians, under the Title of The Royal Company of Comedians.

THAT the Lord-Chamberlain of Your Majesty's Household has, by a written Order, intimidated a principal Comedian from Acting; and, by Promises, does encourage other Actors to disturb Your Petitioner's said Government, to the great Prejudice of his Fortune and Property.

THAT Your Petitioner is further  
threaten'd with an extraordinary Use of  
Your Majesty's Power, to the Disappoint-  
ment

ment and frustrating his said Authority.

THAT Your Petitioner humbly conceives, that he has fully answered all the Designs of Your Majesty's Grant, to the great Improvement of the Theatre.

Your Petitioner therefore most humbly prays he may not be any way molested but by due Course of Law.

And Your Petitioner shall ever Pray, &c.

It was my ill Fate to find no other Effect of this Petition, but the following Order the next Day.

‘ Whereas by Our Royal Licence,  
‘ bearing Date the 18th Day of October,  
‘ 1714, We did give and grant unto  
‘ Richard Steele Esq; now Sir Richard  
‘ Steele Knight, Mr. Robert Wilks, Mr.  
‘ Colley Cibber, Mr. Thomas Dogget, and  
‘ Mr. Barton Booth, full Power, Licence and Authority, to form, constitute and establish a Company of  
‘ Comedians.



† Comedians. And having received  
 † Information of great Misbehaviours  
 † committed by our Company of Co-  
 † medians, now acting at the Theatre  
 † in *Drury-lane*. Therefore, for refor-  
 † ming the Comedians, and for estab-  
 † lishing the just and antient Authority  
 † of the Officers of our Household, and  
 † more especially of our Chamberlain :  
 † We have thought fit to revoke the  
 † above mentioned Licence. And we  
 † do farther, (as much as in us lies, and  
 † as by *Law we may*) revoke and make  
 † void all other Licences, Powers and  
 † Authorities whatsoever, and at any  
 † time heretofore given by us to the  
 † said Sir *Richard Steele*, *Robert Wilks*,  
 † *Colley Cibber*, *Thomas Dogget*, and *Bar-*  
 † *ton Booth*, or to any of them sever-  
 † rally.

I must here acknowledge, that the  
 Sense of the Chamberlain's former Pa-  
 tronage made me write him a Letter  
 in the *Theatre*, much below the Justice  
 of my Cause, and that Manhood which  
 Right and Equity ought to have sup-  
 ported me in, against Injury and Oppres-  
 sion.

In the Allegory of a Bee-hive, and its Owner, I have represented myself and Company destroy'd by the Precipitancy which sometimes attends the most generous Natures. But since this was received as it was, I shall study no more Types, Shadows, or Similies, to inform this Lord of, and prove to him the Wrong he has done me ; but will seek Redress by Application to the King in Council, or by due Course of Law. The Reader will observe, that the Order mentions Licences, Powers and Authorities, to the Persons nam'd therein, and then obliquely aims at the Patentee in the Words, *or to any of them severally*, but not a Word of Grant or Patent, which was vested only in Steele, and would not have agreed well with the just and gracious Words, *as much as in us lies, and as by Law we may*.

Under this thin Disguise, and by misleading the King by the Words of Reserve against any unlawful Molestation to be done me, the Lord-Chamberlain took upon him, immediately after, to send the following Order to the Managers of the Play-house, with which they were intimidated, to forbear to act any longer under my Jurisdiction, or pay me  
any

any Money for the future, in Contempt of our former Contracts and Agreements.

*Whereas His Majesty has thought fit, by his Letters of Revocation, bearing Date the twenty third Day of January 1719, (for divers weighty Reasons therein contain'd) to revoke his Royal Licenoe. For the effectual Prevention of any future Misbehaviour, in Obedience to His Majesty's Commands, I do, by Vertue of my Office of Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household, hereby discharge you the said Managers and Comedians at the said Theatre in Drury-lane in Covent-Garden, from farther Acting. Given under my Hand and Seal this 25th Day of January 1719.*

To the Gentlemen managing the Company of Comedians at the Theatre in Drury-lane in Covent-Garden, and to all the Comedians and Actors there.

The Loss I have hereby sustain'd, I value as follows.

Six

Six hundred a Year, for	}	l.	s.	d.
Life, is moderately valu-				
ed at       —      —	}	6000	00	00
The Three Years after	}	1800	00	00
my Life       —      —				
My Share in the Scenes,	}	1000	00	00
Stock, &c.       —				
The Profit of acting my	}	1000	00	00
own Plays already writ,				
or I may write       —	}	<hr/>		
		9800	00	00

The thing itself is but a Shop to work in, and received nothing from the Crown. And if a Man shall hazard his All for the Publick, and expect no more but what his own Skill and Labour, in Conjunction with his Assigns, shall bring him, such a one should be the last Man that ought to suffer Molestation. If I had been Laceman, Saddler, or Shoemaker to the Crown by Patent, I could not have been dispossest'd but by due Course of Law, and according to the Prices I should have set upon my Goods: And shall the noble Ends and Purposes, set forth in this Charter, be overlook'd and suppress'd in a summary Way, and no Redress?

But it is apparent the King is grossly and shamelessly injur'd against his gracious Precaution in the Order by *Sign Manual.*



*Manual.* The Chamberlain has done the same Favour to other Gentlemen, with regard to Parliament, which he has for me, and they have acted their own Way as well as I, and he has not yet enter'd upon their Estates.

I never did one Act to provoke this Attempt; nor does the Chamberlain pretend to assign any direct Reason of Forfeiture, but openly and wittingly declares he will ruin *Steele*; which is, in a Man in his Circumstances against one in mine, as great as the Humour of *Malagene* in the Comedy, who valued himself upon his Activity for tripping up Cripples. All this is done against a Man, to whom Whig, Tory, Roman-Catholick, Dissenter, Native, and Foreigner, owe Zeal and Goodwill for good Offices endeavour'd towards every one of them in their Civil Rights, and their kind Wishes to him are but a just Return. But what ought to weigh most with his Lordship, the Chamberlain, is my Zeal for his Master; of which I shall at present say no more, than that his Lordship, and many others, may perhaps have done more for the House of *Hanover* than I have; *But I am the only Man in His Majesty's Dominions who did all he could.*

F I N I S.

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